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Golden Gate Audubon Society

THE GULL



JANUARY: WILDLIFE OF THE GALAPAGOS

The wildlife and natural wonders of the Galapagos Islands will be the subject of a slide show and lecture by visiting naturalist Ron LeValley at our *January 12, 1989* meeting in San Francisco. LeValley, who has led trips to the island group made famous by Charles Darwin for the past five years, will focus on the unique variety of wildlife in his talk: "Galapagos—The Enchanted Isles."

The Humboldt County naturalist will talk about giant tortoises, ocean-going iguanas and a confusing array of finches named after Darwin which live among the sea lions, flamingos and a multitude of seabirds, including the Blue-footed Booby. LeValley's California-based company, Biological Journeys, runs cruises all over the Pacific, from Alaska to the Great Barrier Reef. In addition to being a charismatic and engaging speaker, LeValley is an expert on Pacific coast birds and a wildlife consultant for Native American Tribes. He has taught natural history classes for more than 15 years and was a biologist at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory's Farallon Island Research Station.

Ron is coming all the way down from Arcata in northern California to present his program, so I hope you all can make it to the **Josephine Randall Museum**, located at 199 Museum Way in San Francisco, at **7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 12th.**

EMERYVILLE CRESCENT

The Crescent is threatened, this time by a proposed widening of I-80 freeway. Help is needed to put the widening on the east side of the route rather than in the marsh. Please write a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers and BCDC:

Col. Galen Yanagihara
District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
San Francisco District
211 Main Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Bay Conservation and
Development Commission
30 Van Ness Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94102

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Refer to Public Notice No. 1776E47, the Emeryville Crescent. Ask that this permit application be rejected.

1. The Crescent is too valuable a natural resource and shelters endangered species: California Clapper Rail, Least Tern and Brown Pelican and is important for others. As many as 10,000 shorebirds have been counted here.

2. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should perform a consultation under the Endangered Species Act to protect this wetland.

3. There is danger to the wildlife from loss of upland habitat, and this should be evaluated.

4. There is danger from the impacts of the construction process on the marsh.

5. The proposal does not meet EPA 404(b) (1) Guidelines: the project is not water dependent and no alternate site analysis has been performed.

NUMBERS OF LETTERS DO COUNT. A SHORT LETTER IS BEST. JUST SAY THAT THE WILDLIFE VALUES OF THE CRESCENT OUTWEIGH ANY OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

Remember the field trip report in *The Gull* for December (p.162): more than 40 species were seen in the Crescent that morning.

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, Jan. 7—Stockton, Lodi and Thornton. See *The Gull* for December for details.

Sunday, Jan. 8—Dillon Beach. See *The Gull* for December.

Wednesday, Jan. 11—Mini-trip to Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the marsh. Take Hwy. 880

(Nimitz) to the Hegenberger exit, proceed to Dolittle and turn right. Go a short distance and turn right onto Swan. Turn left after about a block and follow the signs to the marsh. Park in the second parking lot on the left. We will look for burrowing owls and waterfowl. Rain cancels trip. Leader: Anna Wilcox (351-9301) and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Saturday, Jan. 14—Palo Alto Baylands. Take Hwy. 101 south to Palo Alto. Exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the yacht harbor and the Baylands Refuge until you reach the duck pond on the left (just beyond the Palo Alto Airport). Meet at the east end of the pond at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch, scope, and clothes appropriate for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, rails and shorebirds. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074). (✓)

Sunday, Jan. 15—Grizzley and Joice Islands Wildlife Area. Take I-80 north to Fairfield, and then the West Texas St. exit for about one-half mile to the City Park. Meet at the parking lot near the entrance at 8:30 a.m. We will caravan from there to the refuge. We should see a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors and marshbirds. Bring lunch and scopes. Leader: Peter Allen (892-8063). (✓)

Saturday, Jan. 21—Carrizo Plain. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the town of Cholame, on Hwy. 46. (Midway between Kettleman City and Paso Robles. Lodging is available in both cities.) From the Bay Area drive south on I-5 to Kettleman City, then west for 28 miles on Hwy. 41 to the intersection of Hwy. 46. Continue west 2 miles on 46 to Cholame. Or, from the Bay Area drive south on Hwy. 101 to Paso

Robles, then east for 24 miles on Hwy. 46 to Cholame. Driving time is four and one-half to five hours, so we suggest you plan to arrive Friday evening. We will bird all day, so you may choose to stay in the area Saturday night.

Bring lunch, liquids, warm clothes, and perhaps a scope. We will caravan from Cholame to Carrizo Plain. This area is excellent for a wide variety of Raptors, Mountain Plover, Longspurs and usually Sandhill Cranes. Not only will we see birds, but we will also discuss the geology of the area. The San Andreas Fault is very much in evidence and is an outstanding feature here. The Nature Conservancy is working on this area to establish a refuge.

Considering the length of the drive and the possibility of adverse weather conditions, it is possible that this trip will be cancelled at the last minute. It also will be called off if there is an insufficient number of participants. It is therefore important that you notify Russ Wilson (524-2399) if you plan to attend. Leave your name, number in your party, and a phone number where you can be reached if the trip is cancelled. Leader: Eben McMillan. (✓)

Saturday, Feb. 4—Panoche Valley. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the reservoir on Hwy. 25 one-quarter mile south of the intersection of Hwy. 25 and J-1 in Paicines, 12.5 miles south of Hollister. From there we will drive east to I-5 south of Los Banos. Bring lunch and warm clothes. In the past we have seen Mountain Plover, Mountain Bluebird, Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, Vesper Sparrow and Lewis' Woodpecker.

Considering the distance involved in this trip be sure to fill your gas tank before starting, and carpool from the Bay Area if possible.

For reservations call Russ Wilson (524-2399) if you plan to attend. Leave your name, phone number, and number

in party. Assume your Reservation is accepted unless you hear otherwise. (Many participants stay over in Los Banos and join the Sunday field trip.) Leader: Chris Carpenter (268-7509). (✓)

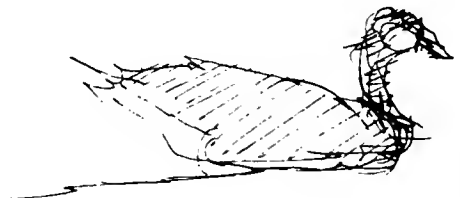
Sunday, Feb. 5—Los Banos State Refuge. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the refuge headquarters located 3 miles north of Los Banos on Henry Miller Rd. Allow two and one-half to three hours driving time from the Bay Area. Considering the distance involved in this trip, be sure to fill your gas tank before leaving, and carpool from the Bay Area if possible. Bring lunch and warm clothes. We will look for White-faced Ibis, Sandhill Cranes, Bald Eagles and assorted waterfowl. Call Russ Wilson for reservations if you plan to attend this trip (524-2399). Leave your name, phone number, and number in party. Assume your reservation is accepted unless you hear otherwise. Leaders: Peter and Dolores White (229-1714). (✓)

Wednesday, Feb. 8—Mini-trip to Lafayette Reservoir. Take Hwy. 24 beyond Orinda to the Acalanes exit, continue 3/4 mile on Mt. Diablo Blvd. and follow the sign on the right to the reservoir. Meet at 9:00 a.m. There is a \$1.00 fee for day parking. We will see song and winter birds. Lunch optional. Rain cancels. Leader: Anna Wilcox (351-9301) and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Sunday, Feb. 26—Monterey Bay pelagic trip. See announcement, p. 12.

Carpooling will be attempted for trips marked (✓). If you can take a passenger call Russ Wilson (524-2399).

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE



BW

OBSERVATIONS

October 25 through November 29

The SE Farallon Islands had an extraordinary and record-setting late wave of migrants Oct. 24–30 (117 species reached the island on October 27!). Meanwhile, mainland birders shared in the Siberian fallout which continued through November.

News from The Farallones

The breeding bird season on Southeast Farallon was an up and down affair. Food was very abundant through June, but it dropped off in July. This set of conditions was good for the Common Murres who started early. They had their third best season, fledging their young before the local food shortage of July began. This is surely good news for the Murres, whose population was greatly reduced because of gill-netting practices (now banned in this area). However, these fledgees are 4–6 years away from breeding, so lets hope that no natural catastrophes team up with man-made disasters in the meantime. Other Island breeding species which did well were Western Gulls, Cassin's Auklets and Rhinoceros Auklets. Brandt's Cormorants suffered a below average fledging rate, and Pigeon Guillemots had mixed success.

As you read this a whole new cycle has begun on Southeast Farallon, and as I write Western Gulls have already returned and are re-establishing territories. All SE Farallon Island information is courtesy of Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO). [Much of the above information was gleaned from a PRBO publication called "Farallon Poop Sheet" which is obtainable from PRBO, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970 for \$2.00 a year. Of course, if you join PRBO you will get the "Poop Sheet" free, along with their prize-winning Newsletter.]

Albatrosses through Murre

Forty Black-footed Albatrosses off Cordell Bank Nov. 26 was a large number for a fall boat trip which also included twelve Laysan Albatrosses (RN, *fide* BBrr). Two Flesh-footed Shearwaters were seen off Cordell Bank Oct. 30 (RS, SFB).

A Little Blue Heron/Snowy Egret hybrid found Nov. 8 at Charleston Slough (AWi), remained through the period (mob). Twenty-two Eurasian Wigeons were seen throughout the area during the period (mob), and several hybrid Eurasian/American Wigeons were reported, although some confusion exists over the fall plumage of the Eurasian Wigeon and that of a true hybrid between these species. A Canvasback reached SE Farallon for only the second time in twenty years of record keeping there. At least two and possibly three Tufted Ducks were in San Francisco: a male at Lake Merced Nov. 19–20 (DPM, JM), another male at Elk Glen Lake Nov. 27 (DAsh)—possibly the same bird, and a female at old Sutro Baths Nov. 27 (JM). The male Harlequin Duck at Bolinas Lagoon remained through the period (KH), and one was still being seen at Ano Nuevo Nov. 26 (MBu). An Oldsquaw was found in Bodega Bay Nov. 27 (NTC).

Totals from Hawk Hill 129 at the Marin Headlands include 11 Northern Goshawks through Nov. 27, **59** Broad-winged Hawks through Nov. 19, **51** Rough-legged Hawks through Nov. 27, and 16 Prairie Falcons through Nov. 19 (CLF). A Broadwinged Hawk was five miles east of Tomales Nov. 24 (RHa). About twenty-nine Rough-legged Hawks were spotted along our coast in addition to those counted over Hawk Hill (mob). Several observations were of five or more at one time, with eight being seen from Bodega Head on Nov. 26 (NTC, et al.).

Three Black Oystercatchers found their way inside the Bay to the Richmond Breakwater Nov. 1 (PR, *fide* PJM). A **Spotted Redshank** was found near Walnut Grove off Staten Island Road, San Joaquin Co. Nov. 19 (MJL), and was last seen briefly on Nov. 20 (BBrr), a fourth California record of this palearctic species. A Rock Sandpiper was in a traditional spot at Princeton jetty Nov. 6–26 (MiW, mob). The Ruff at Bodega Bay continued to be seen through Oct. 30 (RS, SFB). Another was found in flooded fields off Staten Island Road Nov. 25 (DGY) near the Spotted Redshank location.

The immature Franklin's Gull was still present at the Stockton sewage ponds Nov. 14, and an adult Little Gull was at Lodi sewage ponds Nov. 16 (DGY). A Glaucous Gull at SE Farallon Oct. 24 was considered extremely early. One also was seen off SE Farallon, near Fanny Shoals Oct. 29–30 (DWm). A juvenile Sabine's Gull was at Peyton Slough, Martinez Oct. 26 (CC). A **Thick-billed Murre**, in a group of Common Murres, was flying off East Landing at SE Farallon Oct. 29. It was described by the observer as looking like "a weightlifter in a group of ballerinas" (PP). If accepted by the California Bird Records Committee it will constitute the first Island record.

Landbirds

Surprising numbers of Short-eared Owls returned to the coast during the period. **Seventeen** reached SE Farallon Oct. 27, one was found in Panoche Valley Oct. 29 (DSg), three were at Palo Alto Baylands Nov. 23 (RAr), and another three were at Las Gallinas Sewage Nov. 25 (TJ), and at MacGinnes Park Nov. 27 (DES). A Lesser Nighthawk was seen at Lucchesi Park, Petaluma Nov. 20 (DN). A Costa's Hummingbird visited a residence in Alamo Nov. 9 (JR). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was in Solano Co. off

Pleasants Valley Road Nov. 19 (MBG). An Eastern Phoebe reached SE Farallon Nov. 16. A tropical Kingbird was at Lake Merced in San Francisco Nov. 9–10 (PTr, MLR).

Another **Northern Wheatear** was found this fall, this time at SE Farallon Nov. 6–10. It had only one tail feather. Two Sage Thrashers strayed westward, one as far as Hayward Shoreline in the restricted area Nov. 10 (RJR), and another to a Walnut Creek residence Nov. 4 (MW, *fide* JR). An adult Brown Thrasher arrived on SE Farallon Oct. 30 and remained at least to Nov. 28, but it was elusive and rarely seen during that time. The Bendire's Thrasher in Lodi continued to be seen through November 27 (JM, DGY, SP, mob). A Red-throated Pipit, a fourth island record, was on SE Farallon Oct. 27. A **Yellow-green Vireo** at SE Farallon Oct. 25 brings our fall total to three! **Vagrant Warblers**

A third warbler chart seems warranted this fall because of the late fallout of migrants. It is organized in the same manner as last month's and lists 56 individuals (272 for fall) of 12 species (22 for fall).

Tennessee Warbler (total 1; 23 for fall)			
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 28	<i>fide</i> KH	
Magnolia Warbler (total 1; 15 for fall)			
1 Carmel River mouth	Oct. 28	<i>fide</i> DR	
Black-throated Blue Warbler (total 3; 19 for fall)			
3 SE Farallon	Oct. 24–28	PRBO	
Black-throated Green Warbler (total 2)			
2 SE Farallon	Oct. 24; 27	PRBO	
Prairie Warbler (total 1; 9 for fall)			
1 Carmel River mouth	Oct. 28	<i>fide</i> DR	
Palm Warbler (total 33; 84 for fall)			
20 SE Farallon	Oct. 23–27	PRBO	
4 Outer Pt. Reyes	Oct. 25(3); 29	RS, DDeS	
2 Pescadero (town)	Oct. 27–29(1),	RSTh	
	Nov. 6 (2)		
2 Half Moon Bay Airport	Oct. 30	PJM	
	(cont. birds)		
1 Lake Merced	Nov. 9	PTr, MLR	
1 Ft. Funston	Nov. 19	SMo	
1 Pilarcitos Creek	Nov. 25–27	DKe, SFB	
1 Ano Nuevo State Res.	Nov. 26	MBu	
1 S.F. Levi Plaza, near	Nov. 28–29	RKo	

Blackpoll Warbler (total 1; 45 for fall)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 25	PRBO
Black-and-white Warbler (total 5; 17 for fall)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 26	PRBO
1 Carmel River mouth	Oct. 28	<i>fide</i> DR
1 G.G. Park-North Lake	Nov. 13	ASH,DPM
1 Bolinas Lag.-Pine Gulch Creek	Nov. 17	RMS
1 Pescadero Creek	Nov. 20	SMo
American Redstart (total 6; 36 for fall)		
3 SE Farallon	Oct. 24-25	PRBO
1 Pt. Reyes-Lighthouse	Oct. 27	PT
1 Pescadero Creek	Oct. 29-	
	Nov. 5	RSTh,SEF
1 G.G. Park-Middle Lake	Nov. 19-27	SSc <i>fide</i> JM, SMo
Ovenbird (total 1; 8 for fall)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 25	PRBO
Northern Waterthrush (total 1; 9 for fall)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 24	PRBO
Canada Warbler (total 1; 6 for fall)		
1 SE Farallon	Oct. 26	PRBO

Tanager to Crossbills

A Summer Tanager joined the "tail-end" of migrants to reach SE Farallon Oct. 29. An Indigo Bunting was at Nunes Ranch Oct. 29 (JMD), and another late arrival visited SE Farallon Nov. 20.

A Green-tailed Towhee was at the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Oct. 25 (RS). An American Tree Sparrow was found at the Spaletta Plateau Oct. 29 (DAH). Four Clay-colored Sparrows reached coastal locations during the period and a fifth possible Clay-colored was in Lodi at the Bendire's Thrasher location Nov. 25 (TCO). A hybrid Brewer's/Chipping Sparrow was discovered at SE Farallon Oct. 26. A Vesper Sparrow was seen just north of Delevan NWR Nov. 20 (AKr). The first Sharp-tailed Sparrow this fall was found at Palo Alto Baylands Nov. 24 (WGB). Ten Swamp Sparrows were located coastally, and one was found along the Consumnes River at Twin Cities Rd. bridge in Sacramento Co. Nov. 25 (TCO). Eleven additional White-throated Sparrows arrived in the area through the period for a fall total of twenty-six (mob). The

Harris' Sparrow at the foot of Cargo Way in San Francisco was seen at least through Nov. 24 (mob). Another Harris' Sparrow was in the restricted area at Hayward Regional Shoreline Nov. 17 (RJR). A Dark-eyed Junco of the Gray-headed form was at a Moraga residence Nov. 19-25 (GA, SFB, mob). The Lapland Longspur flock at Spaletta Plateau fluctuated from one to twenty, dwindling to about eight Nov. 24 (mob, SMo). As many as twelve Laplands were at Drake's Corners Nov. 1 (A&WG). About eight Chestnut-collared Longspurs were found during the early part of the period. The last report was of a single Chestnut-collared at Spaletta Plateau Nov. 8 (A&WG).

A **Rustic Bunting**, found along Pilarcitos Creek west of Highway 1 in Half Moon Bay Nov. 25 (DKe), was identified Nov. 26 (RSTh, BS, JM, SFB, et al.). Very few observers were fortunate enough to see this small sparrow-like species as it moved from the brussel sprout fields to the willows. On Nov. 27 it managed to elude all but one observer first thing in the morning (MPa, *fide* SFB), and it was not seen again. The Rustic Bunting breeds in northern Eurasia and flies to China, Japan and south Europe to spend the winter. The only other record of this species in California was at Stone Lagoon in Humboldt Co. Jan. 1984. An adult male **Snow Bunting** arrived at SE Farallon on their "Big Day" Oct. 27. The adult male Orchard Oriole near Esplanade Park in Pacific Grove was seen again Oct. 25 (DC). A flock of twelve to fifteen Red Crossbills were near Five Brooks Pond in Marin Co. Oct. 30-Nov. 17 (SMo, JM, MLR).

Although I don't have space to publish observations of probable escaped caged birds I think it is important to document their occurrence. Please continue to report them to either

Joe Morlan or myself for inclusion in the database.

Observers: Garth Alton, Jan Andersen, Ron Arps (RAR), Dick Ashford (DAsh), John Ashford (JAsh), Stephen F. Bailey, Bruce Barrett, William G. Bousman, Herb Brandt, Joe Broyles (JBr), Joelle Buffa (JBU), Mark Butler (MBu), Ted A. Chandik, Nick Coiro, Terry Colborn, David Cole, Tom Condit (ToC), Nancy T. Conzett, Chris Cutler, J. Mike Danzenbaker, Dave DeSante, Elizabeth Dickey (EDi), Hugh Dingle, Carter L. Faust, Chris Field, Shawneen E. Finnegan, Al & Wilma Ghiorso, Marguerite B. Gross, Keith Hansen, Ed Hase, Rob Hayden (RHa), David A. Holway, Alan S. Hopkins, Tony Jackson, Dan Keller (DKe), Richard Kovac (RKO), Andy Kratter (AKr), Bill Lenarz, Donna Lion, Michael J. Lippsmeyer, Kay H. Loughman, Robert V. Merrill, Peter J. Metropulos, Mark C. Miller, Joseph Morlan, Scott Morrical (SMo), Daniel P. Murphy, Dan Nelson, Paul L. Noble, Ron Nordon, George Page, Mike Patton (MPa), Courtney Peddle, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Phil Henderson), Steve Pottier, Peter Pyle, Jean Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Paul Riley, Don Roberson, Mary Louise Rosegay, Barry Saupe, Steve Schaeffer (SSc), Donald E. Schmoldt, Dan Singer (DSg), Rich Stallcup, Mary Beth & Chuck Staven, Robert M. Stewart, Ron S. Thorn (RSTh), Francis Toldi (FrT), Pepper Trail, Pat Triggs (PTr), Margaret Wardsworth, Mike Wihler (MiW), Anna Wilcox (AWi), David Wimpfheimer (DWm), David G. Yee.

Please report observations to Northern California Rare Bird Alert: 528-0288 or 524-5592.

—HELEN GREEN

Observations Editor

2001 Yolo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707

CONSERVATION NOTES

Who Cares About Posterity?

A noted historian, interviewed by Bill Moyers recently, said that our founding fathers had a sense of providing for posterity that we have lost. Environmentalists do care about future generations; the Conservation Committee is devoted to preservation.

Expert Gregg Miller recently left this area. We have a small Conservation Committee; we need dedicated people, expert or not. Call Barbara if you are interested in attending Conservation meetings on the second Monday of each month.

Oh, there are some side benefits—where else could you get locked in the building for an hour after the meeting and have to take the screws off the doors to get out?

Goodbye, good luck to Gregg and thanks. We hope some of you out there come join us.

—CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

MONO LAKE UPDATE

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) released its Draft Comprehensive Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement in late September for the Mono Lake Basin National Forest Scenic Area. In it they set forth five alternatives and recommend the “Interpretive” alternative (INT) which provides, among other things, that lake levels be maintained in the range of 6,390 to 6,377 feet above sea level. Mono Lake is just about at that lower limit now, a level at which the land bridge begins to form connecting Negit Island to the mainland.

The Mono Lake Committee is encouraged that the USFS has taken a

strong position on lake levels and feels that the Plan, if strengthened and enforced, could lead to permanent protection for the Lake.

The "Amenites" alternative (AMN) provides the most acceptable lake levels (6390-6380 ft.). In order to provide an adequate buffer against dry years Mono Lake needs to be maintained at about 6388 ft. The AMN alternative also provides the strongest protection for the Mono Basin's resources by addressing the issues of wildlife habitat, restoration of native plant and animal species, and preservation of visual and geologic values.

The most important thing you can do for Mono Lake this year is to write to the Forest Service praising it for its commitment to maintain Mono Lake at a life-sustaining level, and encourage it to adopt the AMN alternative. Letters need to be sent to: Dennis Martin, Forest Supervisor, Inyo National Forest, 873 North Main, Bishop, CA 93514, and received by him before January 19, 1989.

If you would like more information a four-page summary of the Draft Management Plan and the Mono Lake Committee's recommendations is available in the GGAS office.

SUPERCONDUCTIVITY (from NAS release)

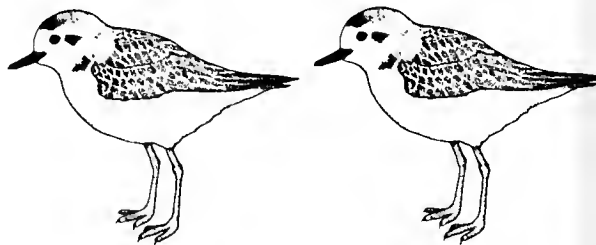
Dr. Jan Beyea for Audubon's Environmental Policy Department recently joined a host of physicists and industry leaders at Robert Redford's Institute for Resource Management to ponder the implications of superconductivity. The

last few years have seen enormous advances in superconductors—specialized materials that, when cooled to abnormally low temperatures, conduct electricity with little or no resistance. The current frenzy of research is expected to lead to the eventual development of room temperature superconductors, making the technology more economical.

While scientists predict superconductivity will one day have a major impact in many areas of modern society, it will be some time before its applications reach a scale where they might be environmentally disruptive. Thus, Beyea feels that we still have an opportunity and an obligation to channel its growth into environmentally benign directions.

Despite the promise of enhanced electrical conductivity, the scientists concluded that the new technology will not significantly improve the efficiency of power transmission. In fact, calculations suggest that even if all long-distance transmission were based on superconductors, power losses would be decreased by only three percent.

Moreover, massive deployment of superconducting devices would greatly increase the intensity of magnetic fields in the environment. This poses potential human health threats, and could interfere with magnetic-based animal orientation, such as bird migrations. Clearly, Beyea asserts, further environmental research will need to proceed as the new technology evolves.



BACK YARD BIRDER

A bird's bill is truly a wondrous item, a necessary tool serving many purposes other than the obvious one of feeding. It is used for preening, scratching, carrying, nest-building, egg-turning, hatching, grasping, excavating, climbing, and defending as well as attacking. A bill can also be brightly colored during courtship and, therefore, used to attract a mate.

Like our fingernails, a beak or bill is made up of keratin, a product of the top layer of skin. This horny sheath covers both upper and lower mandibles. It is thickest at the tip of the bill where the most wear occurs. New keratin is being formed constantly to replace old, worn areas. The edges of the bill may be sharp for cutting, serrated for grasping or sieve-like for straining food. Nostrils appear in nearly all birds but there are variations. e.g. Gannets are sea birds which dive from heights so they have no nostrils and are actually "Mouth breathers", keeping their mouths shut when they hit the water. Nostrils of woodpeckers are protected from sawdust by either having narrow slits or by having nostrils covered by feathers.

By studying bills' shapes, we can guess at a specific bird's life-style and diet. Oystercatchers have the original oyster knife for a bill. The bill is flattened laterally so it can be inserted between the closed shell to sever the muscle holding it together. The hooked beak of a bird of prey nicely tears food into bite-sized pieces. Shorebirds have a huge variety of bill shapes for probing different depths for different foods, thus accommodating many birds in many food niches. Western Grebes always stab fish with their long, sharp bills, then eat them. Ducks must sort seeds

and insects from murky water so they have touch receptors on the edges of their bills. Finches crack and husk seeds with blunt bills. Whip-poor-wills use their wide-gaping, bristle-fringed bills like a giant vacuum cleaner, sweeping in insects during flight. A puffin's jumbo bill is a precision instrument which can kill and then carry 20 fish, caught one at a time. Apparently, a puffin kills a fish, then keeps it by an interplay between a sharp-tipped beak, a ridged mouth roof and a fleshy, mobile tongue.

The variety among bills is seemingly endless. You are limited only by your imagination. Stranger than fiction is the flamingo's fantastic beak. It is extremely thick and bent sharply downward at the middle. Inside the bill are rows of lamellae which act as a sieve. The birds feed in shallow, muddy water, head upside down, seeking fly larvae, algae, bacteria, small fish and shrimp.

In bird identification a number of terms are used:

- recurved—curved upward as in avocets and godwits
- decurved—curved downward as found among curlews
- serrate—having rows of tooth-like edges. e.g. mergansers
- compressed—flattened on the sides as in kingfishers
- depressed—flattened from top to bottom as in many ducks
- spatulate—wide and flat at the tip as in spoonbills
- lamellate—having sieve-like ridges across the inside of the mandible as in swans

Other more obvious terms are: short, long, straight, broad, narrow, pointed

and conical.

No modern birds have true teeth so they cannot chew. They must swallow their food whole or pull or break it into pieces.

Many birds survive very well with simple bills adapted for pecking and grasping. The crow family (our Scrub Jay, e.g.) is an example of such a bill, not highly specialized for catching or feeding, but sturdy and useful as a tool.

Because birds' forearms are actually their wings, bills are no doubt fantastic adaptations. They certainly serve a myriad of purposes.

—MEG PAULETICH

WE ARE MOVING!

Our cozy nest at the CO-OP must finally be abandoned. The uncertainties surrounding the changes of ownership at the Shattuck Avenue store prompted us to look elsewhere—and we found something very special. We are moving to the Strawberry Creek Design Center, a renovated building at 1250 Addison Street, Studio 107B, Berkeley. While the space is not larger, the surroundings are quite different and attractive. The building faces on the recently created park with Strawberry Creek running its natural course—above ground!

We plan to move the first week in January. Our telephone number should remain the same. Office hours are still 9–12 and 1–4, Tuesday through Friday.

Come say hello and let's start the Strawberry Creek Park bird list together.

SPRING BIRDING CLASSES IN SAN FRANCISCO

Evening bird classes will be offered by the San Francisco Community College District. Fees are \$45 per eight-week course and \$40 per seven-week course. Eight-week classes run from Jan. 17, 18 and 19 through March 7, 8 and 9. Seven-week classes continue from April 4, 5 and 6 through May 16, 17 and 18. Pre-registration is recommended. For information, call the Community Services Office at 776-8247.

All classes will be held in room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay St. All classes meet 7–9:30 p.m. Free parking is available in the school lot off Bay St. on the east side of the building.

Each class stresses identification, status and habits of North American birds in two-and-a-half hour weekly slide lectures. The text for all classes is *Field Guide to the Birds of North America* by the National Geographic Society, available from the GGAS office (832-2222). The instructor is **Joe Morlan**, co-author of *Birds of Northern California* and compiler of our weekly recorded "Northern California Rare Bird Alert"—528-0288.

Ornithology I is an introduction to birding and avian biology. It stresses concepts in systematics, evolution, behavior, population ecology illustrated by examples from North American birds, especially common California birds. It meets Tuesdays from 7–9:30 p.m.; part A starts Jan. 17 and part B starts April 4.

Ornithology II is an in-depth study of identification and status of waterbirds including shorebirds, gulls and terns. It

meets Wednesdays from 7-9:30 p.m.; part A starts Jan. 18 and part B starts April 5.

Ornithology III will cover landbirds including jays, chickadees, wrens, thrushes, shrikes, thrashers and pipits. It meets Thursdays from 7-9:30 p.m.; part A starts Jan. 19 and part B starts April 6.

These classes are recommended by GGAS. Optional field trips may be arranged on weekends. Please bring binoculars and field guides to class if you have them.

GETTING INVOLVED

GGAS has a post holiday wish list for members to help the chapter with specific tasks. One may be just the thing to spark your interest and join us in a more active way. We need:

East Bay host or hostess to be responsible for our refreshments at the East Bay general meetings. These are usually four times a year, September, November, February and April, on the second Thursday evening of that month. It is a pleasant opportunity to meet members and make them feel welcome.

Monitor for meetings of the East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors. These meetings are the first Tuesday afternoon of each month, usually beginning at 2 p.m., and are of particular interest to our chapter. The Park District will be administering the Proposition 70 monies for all city park and recreation departments within its jurisdiction as well as the new monies from bond Measure AA. We need someone to monitor proposals for those monies to assure that they are used for wildlife enhancement. Attending these public meetings can be a fascinating and worthwhile experience.

Table sitters to sell tickets for the Wetlands Benefit Drawing. The prize list is valued at \$8,000.00, with the beautiful quilt as grand prize. A few hours from a number of people is the way to do it. Call the GGAS office, 843-2222, to offer time or suggest sites for tables. The whole Bay Area must be alerted to this cause to raise money. Please rally!

BENEFIT DRAWING EXTENDED

Those of you with winning tickets will have to wait until April to claim your wonderful prizes. Our Wetlands Benefit Drawing has been extended several months to accommodate the demand for tickets and to give more of you a chance to participate in the Drawing. This will increase your opportunity to do something positive for wetland preservation and perhaps receive a tangible return. The generosity of the membership has been gratifying, but the needs of our wetlands is great—**INCREASE YOUR CHANCES** and our efforts!

The April drawing date has yet to be determined. We hope to plan a suitable event to highlight our new office, Audubon month and the drawing of our twenty-plus prizes. Meanwhile, start the New Year right and donate to the Wetlands Drawing!



B.W.

PELAGIC TRIP: MONTEREY BAY

GGAS will sponsor a boat trip on Sunday, Feb. 26 on Monterey Bay to view seabirds and marine mammals. We plan a 7:30 a.m. departure from Monterey Harbor. Past trips have produced sightings of albatross, shearwaters, jaegers, alcids, dolphin, whales and other species not usually seen from land.

Reservations may be made by sending \$25 per person to GGAS, 1250 Addison St., 107B, Berkeley, CA 94702. Make checks payable to GGAS and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Details on when and where to meet will be mailed with confirmation notices.

For more information call GGAS at 843-2222.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

The Bay Area Bird Photographers meets monthly at the Baylands. For information write BABP at 1019 Loma Prieta Ct., Los Altos, CA 94022.

Their January meeting is Wednesday, Jan. 4 at 7:30 p.m. Rod Norden will show pictures taken on pelagic trips. He is a member of the group.

February's session will be Wednesday, Feb. 1 at 7:30 p.m. with Frans Lanting, widely published nature photographer.

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

ACR Endowment Drive

The Board of Directors of Audubon Canyon Ranch has announced a major endowment drive. We seek to raise \$2 million dollars during the next 3 years to continue the education and preserva-

tion programs of the Ranch. If you read this column regularly you are aware that about twenty thousand weekend visitors and school children benefit from the Ranch's programs. Those programs are considered some of the finest in the world. Our preservation program is one designed to conserve habitats which might otherwise be lost. As a result of our efforts during the past quarter century we have been able to preserve considerable portions of Bolinas Lagoon, Tomales Bay and the Sonoma Valley.

It is vital that A.C.R. remain on firm financial footing to accomplish the goals of education and preservation for which it was established. We believe our expenses reflect that we are on track. With a budget breakdown of 44% to nature education, 40% to land preservation and management, 8% to research, and 8% to development we think you will agree that donations and grants to Audubon Canyon Ranch are well spent.

The Board believes we can better assure meeting our goals by becoming more self supporting. Our current sources of funds include the following: 36% contributions, 29% foundation and corporate grants, 29% grants, and 6% other. We project the following future sources of income: contributions 35%, foundation and corporate grants 10%, endowment 50%, and other 5%. Note the projected loss of foundation and corporate income. If we are unable to compensate for that dramatic drop in income we will no longer be able to educate the public as we have in the past, and we would be hard pressed to preserve and maintain our present holdings.

It was individuals like us, members of local Audubon chapters, who founded Audubon Canyon Ranch. We paid for it with our donations, helped form its philosophy by providing representatives to its board of directors,

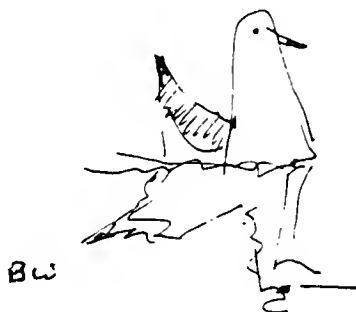
and molded it into a model sanctuary which reflects the conservation and education goals which brought us together as Audubon members in the first place. It was our success with the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve which led to donations of our other major preserves, the Cypress Grove Audubon Preserve by Clifford Conly, and the Bouverie Audubon Preserve by David Bouverie. Here is tangible evidence of the value of our ideas and the potential for their success.

Now we wish to assure the continuity of that success in education and preservation. Although the official start for our endowment drive is January 1, 1989, our very good friends have already donated over \$500,000. We need your help too. This is not an effort to be left to the other guy. Join your fellow Audubon members in supporting our sanctuary. make your check payable to the A.C.R. Endowment Fund, and mail it to the Ranch at 4900 Highway 1, Stinson Beach, CA 94970. For further information feel free to call the Ranch at (415) 868-9244.

Bouverie Preserve Hikes

As you are probably aware, access to the Bouverie Preserve is restricted to docent led groups. The lovely 400 acre preserve is a marvelous place to see spring wildflowers. It's five plant communities are home to most landbirds resident in Sonoma County. Hike through the meadows and woods of this pristine sanctuary, discover its natural history, enjoy its simple beauty, join a member of the Bouverie Audubon Council on a walk through our 400 acre preserve between now and May. All hikes are scheduled for Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Groups are limited to 35, so make your reservations early in the season at (707) 938-4554.

—DAN MURPHY



BAY-DELTA HEARINGS CONFERENCE

Phase II of the State Water Resources Control Board's Bay-Delta Hearings will begin January 9, 1989. To prepare concerned citizens for the continuing process and analyze the recently released draft reports for Phase I, several groups have come together to sponsor a conference at the Oakland Museum Theatre, **Saturday, Jan. 7** from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

GGAS is on the Steering Committee representing a broad spectrum of regional interests concerned with protecting the estuary. The conference will examine impacts of the SWRCB draft standards on the estuary and residents of the region. GGAS members are urged to attend. For more information, call GGAS, 843-2222, or David Fullerton at the Committee for Water Policy Consensus, 682-6633.



MID-WINTER BIRD SEED SALE

Bird feeding has become a pleasant pastime for many of us and it has been our goal to provide good seed to our members at reasonable prices. The 1988 drought produced, as one might expect, a wildly fluctuating grain market and as seed consumers we have been subject to it. Last October's sale did not reflect the changing market due to our early deadlines. However, this February sale must. We have adjusted all of the prices up AND down as they have been passed on to us. Also we are offering slightly different quantities of some items so as to give you a better price break. The chapter appreciates your loyalty to our sales and we do our best to serve you with quality seed while still benefitting conservation activities.

Replenish Your Supply

We urge you to order and prepay to guarantee the type and quantity of seed you desire. There will be some extra seed available but not in the amounts we

have had in the past. And this time, ordering early is important—THE OFFICE HAS MOVED AND MAIL DELIVERY MAY BE ERRATIC.

ORDERING INFORMATION

Please order and prepay by January 23. Orders will be available for pick-up in Berkeley and San Francisco. Confirmation of your order will be sent the week prior to the sale.

Send the order form (with tax calculated please), your check and self-addressed stamped envelope to: Golden Gate Audubon Society, BIRD SEED, 1250 Addison St., 107B, Berkeley, CA 94702.

PICK-UP SATURDAY FEB. 4

Again the Berkeley sale location is 1418 Josephine St., hours from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. The San Francisco location is 1414 Alabama St. in the Mission District between Army and 26th Sts., hours from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. This is Tom White's garage and his phone number is 821-6933 if you need directions.

GIFTS and BEQUESTS

FOR GGAS

In Memory of

Lee Gleason

Helen C. Brenner

Gift of

Elsie Roemer

Theodosia Stewart

FOR WETLANDS

Ellen Calvert

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1250 Addison St., #107B, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

GGAS' OWN PREMIUM MIX: Top quality specially blended for us to meet the needs of Bay Area birds. It contains only red and white millet and black oil sunflower seed. No waste seed. The presence of black oil sunflower seed attracts large numbers of desirable birds.

WESTERN WILD BIRD SEED: Mixed and packaged by Volkman, this mix is composed of only red and white millet—no sunflower seeds (no squirrels). It contains no low-cost fillers the birds will flick aside.

BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED: It is high in oil content and nutritive value and appeals to chickadees and nuthatches, titmice, jays, finches and many other species. This is the best all-around seed for attracting the largest number of desirable birds. December 1988 *SUNSET* agrees.

NIGER (THISTLE SEED): Imported from India, this seed is 98% pure. It is a tiny seed, rich in oil, and is unappealing to larger birds and squirrels. It will not sprout in your yard. Needs a thistle feeder.

GGAS BIRD SEED AND FEEDER SALE

ORDER AND PREPAY BY JAN. 23 / PICK UP ON SATURDAY, FEB. 4

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

☐ Berkeley ☐ San Francisco

SEED			QUANTITY	AMOUNT
GGAS' OWN PREMIUM MIX	20 lbs.	\$ 8.00		
	50 lbs.	\$17.00		
VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED	20 lbs.	\$ 7.50		
	50 lbs.	\$16.00		
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED	20 lbs.	\$15.00		
	50 lbs.	\$27.00		
NIGER (THISTLE SEED)	5lbs.	\$ 9.50		

FEEDERS

DROLL YANKEE 16"	\$25.00		
THISTLE SOCK	\$ 3.00		

SUB-TOTAL

ADD TAX (7%)

TOTAL

CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS

TOTAL

Be sure to include
your check with a
stamped and self-
addressed envelope.



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.

Office: 843-2222

1250 Addison Street, #107B

Berkeley, California 94702

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THE GULL

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) (415) 528-0288

Update: 524-5592

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.